

BOER WAR MEMORIAL ADDRESS

Address by Denis Chamberlain at rededication of plaques on ANZAC Day 2006

This memorial has always been surrounded with controversy and folk law and when Bathurst RSL Sub Branch unveiled the last two additional plaques, the three gentlemen, who unveiled them, on behalf of all other descendants of Bathurst and district Boer War veterans and to represent them another controversy was added with three rosettes on the plaques.

We of Bathurst RSL are aware of the significance of this beautiful memorial in Kings Parade to honour 142 soldiers from Bathurst and district that fought and died in the Anglo Boer War in South Africa 'between' October 11th 1899 to June 1st 1902. Of these I know that least seven or eight also served during WW1 of which three had made the supreme sacrifice. These names represent persons who had once lived in our beautiful city and went off to serve the British Empire for a cause they believed in. Of these district soldiers 5 died. 3 from enteric fever, 1 killed in action and 1 was executed by the British Army.

The sub branch is also aware of misspelt and missing names on the original raised copper nameplate, which cannot be replaced due to its historic value.

When one considers that 16,175 Australian Colonial and Commonwealth forces had enlisted with 16,314 horses sent; 251 were KIA or died of wounds; 267 died of illness; 43 missing in action and 100 became POW's-one will realise that our district had made a major contribution to what is now described as the last Victorian Colonial War.

The memorial was designed by Bathurst architect John Job Copeman. Sculptor Gilbert Doble of Marrickville won the contract to erect the memorial and sub let out some work to builders, Davidson and Worrall. The blue stone was laid by local stone mason, William Aloysius Gale, grandfather to Eric Hicks; his father being the first custodian of the Carillon War Memorial. Doble also carved the sandstone rampant lions and moulded the original bronze soldier statue now removed and on display at Bathurst RSL Club since April 19th 1994.

The photographic model for the bronze soldier was Lieutenant Colonel John Martin Hawkey MC, who was then a young sergeant posted at Victoria Barracks, Paddington and the live model was John Oscar Jackson of St Peters. Doble's studio at Marrickville was only a few doors away from Mr Jackson's residence.

Subject to many years of vandalising the original hollow bronze soldier was removed from the memorial so that a durable solid bronze model could be cast to replace it. On April 19th 1994 the new soldier was placed within the memorial and the original soldier was placed within the Bathurst RSL Club complex.

Last century the British Field Marshal Lord Kitchener paid a visit to Bathurst during his colonial military restructuring of the British Empire and during his visit on January 10th 1910 unveiled this memorial with 92 names on a raised copper plate.

On March 1st 1964 a further 3 separate name strips were unveiled bringing the number to 95 names. These names included Alan Howard, Peter Handcock and Watson Augustus Steel.

It was in 1986 during my research for my publication "History of the Bathurst Contingents" that I found another 39 names.

With the assistance of the late Warren Holt OAM the then secretary of the Bathurst RSL sub branch an additional two plaques were cast and unveiled on July 18th 1992. This brought the number of names to 134.

I have always maintained an interest of those soldiers who were left off the memorial. However since 1992 a further eight names was uncovered. As a result our sub branch commissioned McMurtrie & Co of Orange to cast two addition plaques. The two plaques were unveiled on ANZAC Day 2006 increasing the names to 142. This means that 50 names were left off. All the Boer War veterans are now deceased, but this memorial will ensure that they are not forgotten.

"LEST WE FORGET"

BOER WAR DAY

COMMEMORATION SERVICE

10.00 am Sunday, May 27th 2012

ORDER OF SERVICE AT THE BOER WAR MEMORIAL KINGS PARADE, BATHURST NSW



Artist impression of new Boer War Memorial to be erected in ANZAC Parade, Canberra. Inset is original bronze soldier from Bathurst Boer War Memorial. Bathurst Boer War Memorial page 3.

SERVICE ORGANISED BY RSL BATHURST SUB BRANCH

1. Introduction. President Denis Chamberlain, RSL Bathurst Sub Branch.

2. Wreaths laid.

3. Prayers of Remembrance offered by The Right Reverend Richard Hurford OAM, Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of Bathurst.

4. President Chamberlain, Invites Councillor Tracey Carpenter, Deputy Mayor of Bathurst Regional Council to offer the Commemoration Address.

5. Singing of the Hymn. O GOD OUR HELP IN AGES PAST. By Isaac Watts 1674-1748 with paraphrases of Psalm 90.

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of thy throne,
thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone,
and our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
or earth received her frame,
from everlasting thou art God,
to endless years the same.

6. The Last Post. Bugler Mr Phil Snitch.

7. Ode to the Fallen ended by 'We Will Remember Them'. One minutes silence broken by 'Lest We Forget'.

A thousand ages in thy sight
are like an evening gone;
short as the watch that ends the night
before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all its sons away;
they fly, forgotten, as a dream
dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guide while troubles last,
and our eternal home!

8. Reveille. Bugler Mr Phil Snitch.

9. The Australian National Anthem. ADVANCE AUSTRALIA FAIR.

Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are young and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil,
Our home is girt by sea.

Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In history's page, let every stage
Advance Australia fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia fair.

10. Thank you for your attendance.

11. Benediction. The Right Reverend Richard Hurford.

Bugler for the service-Mr Phil Snitch, The Bathurst City and RSL Concert Band.

President Denis Chamberlain

Hon. Secretary Les Anderson

